firm belief that Villeneuve would return at once from the West Indies; he was wrong in his conviction that Ireland was Napoleon's mark. The united French and Spanish fleets made a fine appearance in the accounts which reached the admiralty, and the activity of the French dockyards was alarming. England's naval ascendancy appeared to the English to be seriously jeopardized.

Villeneuve and his subordinates were apparently the only ones who positively knew that the show made by the allied fleets was deceptive. They complained bitterly, as has been said, of the deficiencies in the equipment of both, and had good cause to do so. That Napoleon was not altogether unaware of this is sufficiently proved by the fact that some one less despondent than Villeneuve was not put in his place. In justice to the French admiral it should be remembered that after his return from the West Indies he displayed great ability. It was a series of masterly movements in which he withdrew from before Calder, entered Ferrol, sailed thence and beat up against a storm to enter the Channel until he was informed that a powerful British fleet was in his path. Many of his ill-equipped craft were much damaged by the gale, and recalling the Emperor's alternative orders, he ran for Cadiz, entering the harbor with thirty-five ships. Collingwood drew off his little blockading squadron, but immediately returned to hover before the port, reinforcements being already on their way from England. Villeneuve remained at anchor. On September twenty-fifth he received orders which had been issued on the fourteenth to weigh anchor, pass through the Strait of Gibraltar, take up the ships lying at Cartagena, and proceed to Naples, in order to cooperate with the army under Saint-Cyr. He was to engage the enemy wherever